

**Testimony before the Appropriations Committee  
February 18, 2009**

Good Afternoon Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and committee members. My name is Maureen Kelly and I am a resident of Norwich, CT.

I have been disabled for twelve years: 80% physically, 20% mentally. I have Cerebral Palsy, 2 Strokes, Sclerosis, Drop Foot, Facial Ticks, Seizures, 2 herniated disks, Arthritis, No depth perception, Glaucoma, ADHD, Asthma and Allergies, and Chronic Pain. I take 20 different prescription drugs for these conditions everyday. My medications are essential to my ability to work. They control my pain and symptoms so that I am able to be productive. There are days I sleep around the clock to get relief from the chronic fatigue after working all week. If my medication access were taken away, productivity would not be possible. This is only part of my story. The other is about the impact of the first part.

I am an independent Contractor so that I can work around my symptoms. With the side effects of my medications, part-time work is all I can manage. No driver's license—Limited employment possibilities. Limited Employment means limited income potential. Living on Disability I have tried to work all but 2 of the last 12 years which includes 2 years full-time with no supports until a car hit me forcing me to lose my job. Having my part-time job gives me some independence to live in the community.

The elimination of Non-Emergency Dental Coverage within Medicaid will cause those who usually go to their local Community Service Clinics to go to the Yale, Hartford Hospital, or UConn Dental Clinics. This will be due to the fact that many of these patients will not be able to pay the sliding scale amount the Community Clinics will charge. Others may be considered just above the Sliding Scale Limit, but may still find the full cost of care a major burden. How is anyone in my position supposed to get to Farmington, Hartford or New Haven, especially when you are already living below the poverty level?

Leanne Goemes of Human Services in Norwich, CT will tell you (via Direct Client Reporting) there are those who will take their dental care into their own hands when the frustration of finding a dentist they can afford becomes too severe.

I implore you to conscientiously examine what quality of life you would want if you suddenly found yourself in this position.

Finally, I would like to thank you for all the services you have given to the recipients of DSS services over the years, especially those I have received. Their existence is the reason I was able to talk to you today.

Sincerely,  
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